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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

WEDNESDAY Sept. 6, 1939

(For Broadcast Use Only)

Subject: "EASIER DISHWASHING." Information from the Office of Experiment Stations, United States Department of Agriculture.

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Among the unpopular household jobs, washing dishes undoubtedly takes the prize. To most women dishwashing is a chore and a bore. You endure it 365 days a year because you can't avoid it.

One way to endure it is to keep your mind on other things while your hands are in the dish water. Another way is to apply your mind to making the job easier and faster.

Here's where the kitchen sink comes in. The sink has so much to do with quick and easy dishwashing. To begin with, your sink needs to be set at the right height for you. If you're about average height, you'll wash dishes most easily when the bottom of the sink is 32 or 33 inches from the floor. There's a simple way to test for right height. Stand up straight and see if you can lay the palms of your hands flat on the sink-bottom without bending your elbows.

What about the size of the sink basin? For an average-size family a basin 30 inches long is about right. That will hold a good sized dishpan comfortably or accommodate dishes easily if you wash them directly in the sink. As for depth, some sinks are deeper than others but the standard 6 inches is satisfactory for family dish washing.

The drainboards or counters on either side of the sink are very important, too, for efficient dishwashing. If you're building a house or remodeling a kitchen, insist on having counters on both sides of the sink. They'll save you endless hours of labor down through the years. And be sure to have these counters large enough

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to hold the dishes without too much stacking and crowding. (Skimpy drainboards mean slow work and broken dishes.) If you are right-handed, you'll wash dishes most easily from right to left. You'll stack dishes on the right and drain them on the left. So you'll want a right counter or drainboard at least 36 inches long to take care of all the soiled dishes an average family uses at one meal. The left drainboard can be a little shorter. The minimum is 32 inches to accommodate the dish drainer.

What if you are unlucky enough to have a kitchen with a counter or drainboard on only one side of the sink? Then use one of those small rolling service tables to hold the stacked dishes. In a large kitchen you'll need a table like that anyway to carry away dishes or wheel the food and dishes to the dining table.

Every housewife knows how much good light on the sink helps in dishwashing. Some women like a window just over the sink; others find that a window on the left throws good light on the sink. The place for an electric light or other artificial light is on the ceiling directly over the sink.

Cupboards right and left, above and below drainboards are another help in speedy dishwashing. They save you from walking back and forth putting away dishes and pots and pans.

Some women like to arrange their cupboards for looks--with pretty dishes out in front and the rest hidden behind. Other women put dishes and utensils away haphazardly, first-come-first-served. But if you're interested in easier dish-washing, you'll arrange for convenience. Generally you'll find it convenient to keep everyday dishes and glass in the lefthand upper cupboard and everyday pots and pans below. Keep everyday silver in a lefthand drawer. Over on the right, put everyday utensils in the top drawer. Clean dish towels and cloths will also go in a righthand drawer, while those in use hang on a rack above the sink. Keep dishwashing supplies like soapflakes, scrapers and dishmop on small shelves just above or below the sink.

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That space under the sink you'll reserve for garbage container, dish pan, drainer, and stool. A stool for dish-washing? Yes, sometimes you can save yourself by washing dishes sitting down, particularly if you have everything arranged within arm's reach and if your stool is of comfortable height.

Now for the actual process of dishwashing. You probably know that washing kettles and pans before the meal saves time and clears space for the dishes afterward. At least, you can fill kettles with water and put them out of the way on the back of the stove to soak during the meal. Of course, you know, too, that kettles in which egg, milk, sugar, or starch have cooked need cold water for soaking while the greasy ones need hot water.

For clearing up dishes, a rubber dish-scraper is a help. So is a cold-water rinse to remove large food particles.

All studies of dishwashing have showed that plenty of hot water and good suds are necessary for a good job. You don't need strong soap to cut grease or film if you have plenty of soap and hot water. Cold flat suds slow up the washing, leave glass streaked, do little toward removing germs, and often clog the drain.

Sanitary regulations in some large cities require that all restaurant dishes be rinsed in boiling water at least one minute, or in very hot water 2 minutes. That's a tip for the housewife. If you have plenty of boiling water for rinsing, you can leave dishes to dry in the air instead of wiping each one with a towel. Air-drying is not only a great time-saver. It's also more sanitary.

For glasses and silver and anything else that must be wiped dry, clean towels speed up the job. Towels need frequent boiling. So do dish cloths and mops.

Well, you see how it is. Some women resign themselves to the drudgery of dishwashing and keep their minds occupied with other things. Other women make the job fast and easy with a well-planned sink-center, plenty of soap and hot water, and a good dish drainer. Take your choice.

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